

Sūrah Aljāthiyah

(Kneeling)

Sūrah Aljāthiyah is Makkī, and it has 37 verses and 4 sections

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

Verses 1 - 11

حَمْدٌ ﴿١﴾ تَنْزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ ﴿٢﴾ إِنَّ فِي السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣﴾ وَفِي خَلْقِكُمْ وَمَا يَبُثُّ مِنْ دَابَّةٍ آيَاتٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٤﴾ وَاختِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ رِزْقٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيحِ آيَاتٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٥﴾ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ ۚ فَبِآيٍ حَدِيثٍ ۚ بَعْدَ اللَّهِ وَآيَتِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٦﴾ وَيَلْ لَّكُلِّ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿٧﴾ يَسْمَعُ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ يُصِرُّ مُسْتَكْبِرًا كَأَن لَّمْ يَسْمَعْهَا ۚ فَبَشِّرْهُ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٨﴾ وَإِذَا عَلِمَ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا شَيْئًا اتَّخَذَهَا هُزُوًا ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿٩﴾ مِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ وَلَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُمْ مَا كَسَبُوا شَيْئًا وَلَا مَا اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾ هَٰذَا هُدًى ۚ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مِّنْ

رَجَزَ الْيَمِّ ﴿١١﴾

Hā Mīm. [1] This is revelation of the Book from Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. [2] Surely in the heavens and the earth, there are signs for those who have faith. [3] And in your creation and in the living beings that He scatters on the earth, there are signs for a people who believe. [4] And in the alternation of the day and the night, and in the provision He has sent down from the sky, then has revived the earth after its death, and in changing of the winds, there are signs for a people who understand. [5] These are Allah's verses that We recite to you rightly. Then, in which discourse, after Allah and His verses, will they believe? [6] Woe to every sinful liar, [7] who hears Allah's verses being recited to him, then he remains adamant out of arrogance, as if he never heard them. So give him the 'good news' of a painful punishment. [8] And when he learns about something of Our verses, he takes it as a laughing stock. For such people, there is a humiliating punishment. [9] In front of them, there is Jahannam. And whatever they have earned will not be of any use to them, nor the patrons they have adopted instead of Allah. And for them, there is a great punishment. [10] This is a guidance. And those who reject the verses of their Lord, for them there is a painful punishment of the divine wrath. [11]

Commentary

This entire Sūrah was revealed at Makkah except for one verse. According to one view, the following verse was revealed at Madīnah: قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يَغْفِرُوا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ أَيَّامَ اللَّهِ (‘‘Tell those who believe that they should forgive those who do not believe in Allah’s days ... 45:14’’). According to this opinion, the rest of the Sūrah was revealed at Makkah. The overwhelming view, however, is that the entire Sūrah was revealed before hijrah or migration. Like other Makkī Sūrahs, its basic subject-matter is the basic beliefs of Islam, such as Oneness of Allah, messenger-ship of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Hereafter.

Arguments and evidence have been adduced in favour of all fundamental articles of Islamic Faith. Evidence, especially in favour of the Hereafter, has been advanced. Criticisms of atheists, and the fallacious arguments of the sceptics have been refuted elaborately .

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ (“Woe to every sinful liar... 45:7”) There are several views related to the background of revelation of this verse. Some Traditions relate that the verse was revealed in connection with Naḍr Ibn Ḥārith. Others report that it was revealed in connection with Ḥārith Ibn Kaldah, and yet others feel it is about Abū Jahl and his comrades. (Qurṭubī). There is no need to refer to a particular person in order to determine the meaning of a Qurʾānic verse. The word kull [every] refers to every person who bears the characteristics of the three persons who might have been in the background of the revelation of the verse.

“In front of them, there is Jahannam...45:10” The word

وَرَاءَ *warā'* in Arabic is mostly used in the sense of "behind" and occasionally used in the sense of "front". Most commentators have taken the word in this context to mean 'front' and we have translated it accordingly. However, some of the commentators have taken it in this context to mean 'back/behind' and interpreted it to mean that those who are living in haughtiness and arrogance, the fire of Hell is trailing behind/after them. (Qurṭubī).

Verse 12-15

اللَّهُ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْبَحْرَ لِتَجْرِيَ الْفُلُكُ فِيهِ بِأَمْرِهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ
فَضْلِهِ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا
فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِّنْهُ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَّتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾
قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يَغْفِرُوا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ أَيَّامَ اللَّهِ لِيَجْزِيَ قَوْمًا بِمَا
كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ أَسَاءَ
فَعَلَيْهَا ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

Allah is the One who has subjugated for you the sea, so that the ships may sail in it with His command, and so that you may seek His grace, and so that you offer gratitude. [12] And He has subjugated for you whatever there is in the heavens and whatever there is in the earth, all from His own. Surely in this, there are signs for a people who reflect. [13] Tell those who believe that they should forgive those who do not believe in Allah's days, so that He may recompense a people for what they used to earn. [14] Whoever acts righteously, it is for his own benefit, and who does evil, it is against it. Then towards your Lord, you will be returned. [15]

Commentary

اللَّهُ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْبَحْرَ (الَى) وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ("Allah is the One who has subjugated for you the sea, so that you may seek His grace, ... 45:12)". Generally, when Qur'ān uses the expression 'to seek His grace' it refers to exerting oneself in seeking one's livelihood. Another meaning of the phrase could be that man has been given the skill to move the boats or pilot the ships on the surface of the waters so that he may carry out his

commercial activities across the globe. It is possible that 'seeking grace' does not have anything to do with the sailing of the boats or the ships. Therefore, a third meaning is possible. 'Subjugating the sea' has a special meaning, that is, Allah has created many useful things in the sea and subjugated the sea for the benefit of mankind so that they may exploit the minerals and other wealth. Contemporary science confirms that the oceans and seas have much more minerals and much more wealth hidden in them than in the dry land.

قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يَغْفِرُوا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ أَيَّامَ اللَّهِ (‘Tell those who believe that they should forgive those who do not believe in Allah’s days ...14’). There are two narrations recorded relating to its cause of revelation. According to one narration, a pagan in Makkah reviled Sayyidnā ‘Umar ؓ and the latter intended to retaliate, but this verse came down and asked the believers to forgive the unbelievers and endure their harm that they direct against them. According to this incident the verse is Makkī. Another narration reports that on the occasion of the battle of Banī-l-Muṣṭaliq, the Prophet of Allah and his Companions pitched their tent at a well called Muraisī. ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Ubayy, the leader of the hypocrites, was with the Muslims. He sent his servant to fetch water from the well. He was delayed in returning. ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Ubayy asked him to give reason why he was late. He replied that one of Sayyidnā ‘Umar’s ؓ servants was sitting on the bank of the well. He did not permit anyone to draw water unless the water-skins of the Prophet of Allah ﷺ and Sayyidnā Abū Bakr ؓ were filled. ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Ubayy cynically quoted the following proverb: سَمَنَ كَلْبِكَ يَا كَلْبُ “Fatten your dog and it will eat you up.” Sayyidnā ‘Umar ؓ heard about it, he armed himself with his sword and went towards ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Ubayy. This verse was revealed on that occasion. According to this incident, the verse is Madanī. (Qurṭubī and Rūḥ-ul-Ma‘ānī). If both the chains of transmitters can be authenticated, the two incidents can be synchronized thus: In the first instance, the verse was originally revealed in Makkah. Then a similar incident took place on the occasion of the battle of Banī-l-Muṣṭaliq. The Messenger of Allah recited the verse and applied it to the second incident. This often happened in cases of the causes of Qur’ānic revelation. Another likelihood is that when the incident of the battle of Banī-l-Muṣṭaliq took place, Sayyidnā Jibrā’īl ؑ might have come down with the verse the second time and reminded that this is

an occasion to act upon it. In the technical parlance of Tafsīr, it is called نزول مكرر or 'repeated revelation'. The verse contains the expression أَيَّامَ اللَّهِ (Allah's days) which, according to most commentators, refers to 'reward and punishment' which Allah will requite on the Day of Requital. The word *ayyām* (days) in the Arabic language is abundantly used in the sense of 'turn of events'.

Another point worth noting is that when the Qur'ān commanded 'Say, [O Muḥammad], to the believers that they should forgive the disbelievers, it did not say, "forgive the idolators"; instead it has said, "...forgive those who do not believe in Allah's days ...[14]". This probably purports to say that the real chastisement awaits them in the Hereafter, but because the unbelievers do not believe in the Hereafter, the punishment will be unexpected for them. An unexpected torture is most excruciating, and therefore the torment will be most harrowing and agonizing. Thus they will be recompensed and repaid fully for all their evil deeds. The Muslims are not to bother about taking them to task for every little thing.

Some of the scholars maintain that the rule of forgiving the infidels applied only before the revelation of the verse of *jihād*. When *jihād* was ordained, the rule of forgiveness, in terms of the current verse, was abrogated. However, most research scholars express the view that this verse has nothing to do with the verse of *jihād*. The current verse sets down the general social law that the Muslims should not wreak vengeance for every little thing. This law is universally applicable in every age and situation - the social law is needed even at the present time, and therefore it is not accurate to treat it as abrogated - especially if we were to take into account the circumstances under which it was revealed: the battle of Banī-l-Muṣṭaliq. If this battle is the cause of revelation of this verse, then verses of *jihād* cannot be the abrogators, because they were revealed before this event.

Verses 16 - 20

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ
الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ وَآتَيْنَاهُمْ بَيْنَتٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ

فَمَا اخْتَلَفُوا إِلَّا مِنْۢ بَعْدَ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ ۚ بَغْيًاۙ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ
يَقْضِي بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ ثُمَّ
جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَىٰ شَرِيعَةٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ فَاتَّبِعْهَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ لَا
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ إِنَّهُمْ لَنُيْغُوْا عَنْكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا ۚ وَإِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ
بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٩﴾ هَذَا بَصَائِرُ لِلنَّاسِ
وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

And We gave the children of Isrā'īl the book and the wisdom and the prophethood, and provided them with good things, and preferred them above the worlds. [16] And We gave them clear proofs of the Matter (i.e. the religion). So they did not fall into disagreement out of mutual jealousy, but after the knowledge had come to them. Surely your Lord will judge between them, on the Day of Judgment, in the matters in which they used to differ. [17] Then We have put you on a certain way of the Matter (i.e. the religion); so follow it, and do not follow the desires of those who do not know. [18] They will never avail you against Allah in the least. And the wrongdoers are friends to one another. And Allah is the friend of the God-fearing. [19] These are insights for the people, and guidance and mercy for a people who believe. [20]

Commentary

These verses purport to confirm the risalah of the Final Messenger of Allah. Under this subject-matter, the Prophet of Allah is consoled for the persecution carried out by the enemies against him.

“...Surely your Lord will judge between them, on the Day of Judgement, in the matters in which they used to differ... 45:17” This far the verses confirm two points: This verse purports to say, firstly, that the Book of Mūsā ﷺ contains many clear prophecies about the advent of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and, secondly to comfort the Holy Prophet ﷺ, that the Israelites rejected him not because there was any dearth of arguments, signs and Divine prophecies to support and establish his claim, but because of jealousy, love of the world and personal desires, that

is, they did not like the very idea that the Final Messenger should have appeared from among the non-Israelites . (Bayān-ul-Qurʾān).

The Status of Previous Shari'ahs for Muslims

“ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَىٰ شَرِيعَةٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ” “Then We have put you on a certain way of the Matter (i.e. the religion)... 45:18”. Here it may be borne in mind that the religion of Islam has certain fundamental articles of faith, such as the Oneness of Allah, the Hereafter and so on; and there are ordinances, laws and injunctions related to practical life. As far as the fundamental articles of faith are concerned, they are immutable and were imparted to every Prophet and his Ummah since the inception of man. However, laws relating to practical life were different for different Prophets and their people. The sacred laws of previous Shari'ahs kept changing according to the needs of time and exigencies of circumstances. In the verse under comment, the second type of practical laws has been described as “...a certain way of the Matter (i.e. the religion)...”. The jurists, on the basis of this verse, have ruled that the Ummah of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ must, of necessity, follow the sacred laws of the Shari'ah of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. As far as the sacred laws of the previous Shari'ah are concerned, this Ummah is not legally bound to them unless the Qurʾān and Sunnah support or confirm them. Support or confirmation may take one of two forms, as follows: (1) the Qurʾān and Sunnah may explicitly say that a certain law of a certain Prophet must be followed by this Ummah; or (2) the Qurʾān and Sunnah may speak highly and favourably about a certain law of a previous Ummah without hinting that it is abrogated for this Ummah. This indicates that the law is applicable in the Shari'ah of this Ummah also. In that case, the previous law becomes part of this Shari'ah, and as such this Ummah is legally bound to follow it. This much is sufficient for us to understand the status of the previous Shari'ahs. Details are available in the books of the Islamic jurisprudence.

Verses 21 - 22

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ اجْتَرَحُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ أَنْ نَجْعَلَهُمْ كَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَا سَوَاءٌ مَّحْيَاهُمْ وَمَمَاتُهُمْ ۚ سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ
﴿٢١﴾ وَخَلَقَ اللَّهُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَلِتُجْزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ۖ

بِمَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

Do those who have committed evils assume that We will make them like those who believe and do righteous deeds, so as their life and death becomes equal? Evil is what they judge. [21] And Allah has created the heavens and the earth with just purpose, and so that everybody is recompensed for what he (or she) earned. And they will not be wronged. [22]

Commentary

The Hereafter: Divine Requit is Rationally Necessary

Of the two verses mentioned, the first one argues rationally that Divine reward and punishment are necessary. Every person is a witness to the fact that no one receives his full measure of reward or punishment for the good or bad deeds he does in this world. Generally, the unbelievers and evil-doers wallow in wealth and lead a life of luxury. The obedient servants of Allah, on the other hand, live in poverty, hardship and misery. In the first place, the crimes of the wicked criminals are often not detected. Even if they are detected, more often than not, they are not apprehended. If they are apprehended, they swear oaths - lawfully or unlawfully, truthfully or falsely - and try to find loopholes to escape punishment. In this way, one in a million might be punished and that too not fully. As a result, the rebels, who follow their selfish and base desires, move about in high spirits and without any hindrance, enjoying full powers in this world. The believers, on the other hand, who follow the Shari'ah strictly, do not touch many kinds of wealth and give up many pleasures because they treat them as unlawful. They only adopt the lawful ways of gaining anything in order to avoid calamities and afflictions. Thus they are deprived of many a comfort and pleasure in this world. Since this is the state of affairs where people are not rewarded or punished in this world in commensurate with their actions, it follows necessarily that there must be another world - the Hereafter and life after death - where people will be recompensed fully for their deeds. Otherwise, it would be absurd to refer to stealing, robbery, adultery, fornication, murder and so on as crimes, in this world. These people often lead a very successful life in this world. A thief or a robber acquires so much of wealth in a night that a university graduate might not be able to acquire it in years of employment and hard work. If there is no such world as the

Hereafter and accountability, then the thief or the robber would be thought to be better than the respectable university graduate. No reasonable person would ever accept this position. If it be pointed out that every government in the world has legislated severe punishments for criminals, then we would respond that experience shows that only the foolish criminals get caught. The clever habitual criminals always find loopholes, and ways and means of escaping punishment. For instance, the escape-door of bribery is always open for them and that is sufficient for them.

In short, the need for the Day of Requitall may be denied only when it is conceded that there is no such thing as good and bad; or that whatever one acquires, by fair means or foul, it is absolutely rewardable. But no one accepts this position. Similarly it is absurd to believe that there is distinction between good and evil, but the consequences are equal, rather the criminal should have a more comfortable life than the righteous and innocent ones. There could be no greater degree of wrong than this. It is to this absurd judgement that the Qur'an refers in سَوَاءٌ مَّحْيَاهُمْ وَمَمَاتُهُمْ "...so as their life and death becomes equal? Evil is what they judge... 45:21)". It is a very unreasonable and unjustifiable position that evil-doers should be placed on the same pedestal as the righteous persons. Since the reward and punishment in this world are not given in full measure, then it necessarily follows that there should be life after death in the Hereafter where reward and punishment will be paid in full measure. Thus the second verse in the set complements the same subject وَلَيُجْزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ (...and so that everybody is recompensed for what he (or she) earned. And they will not be wronged. - 45:22). In other words, the Day of Requitall is necessary in order to wipe out wrong and injustice. As for the question, why the people are not requited or recompensed for the good or bad deeds in this world, we would respond that this is not in keeping with the Divine wisdom of creation: He made this world the 'domain of deeds and test-n-trial', not the 'domain of requital'. Allah knows best!

Verses 23-26

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ

سَمِعِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَجَعَلَ عَلَى بَصَرِهِ غِشْوَةً ۖ فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ اللَّهِ ۖ
 أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَقَالُوا مَا هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا
 وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ ۚ وَمَا لَهُمْ بِذَلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ؕ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ
 ﴿٢٤﴾ وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ مَّا كَانَ حُجَّتَهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا اتُّوۤا
 بِآبَائِنَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُحْيِيكُم ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ
 يَجْمَعُكُمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
 ﴿٢٦﴾

So, have you seen him who has taken his desires as his god, and Allah has let him go astray, despite having knowledge, and has sealed his ear and his heart, and put a cover on his eye? Now who will guide him after Allah? Still, do you not take lesson? [23] And they say, "There is no life but our worldly life. We die and live, and nothing destroys us except time." And they have no knowledge about that; they do nothing but make conjectures. [24] And when Our verses are recited to them in all their clarity, their argument is none but that they say, "Bring our fathers, if you are truthful." [25] Say, "Allah gives you life, then makes you die, then He will assemble you on the Day of Judgement in which there is no doubt, but most of the people do not know. [26]

Commentary

مَنْ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ ("Have you seen him who has taken his desires as his god...45:23) In other words, he who has made his selfish desires his object of worship. Obviously, no unbeliever claims that his desires are his object of worship. Keeping this in view, this verse of the Qur'ān indicates that 'worship' actually means 'obedience'. Thus anyone who undertakes to obey someone against the obedience of Allah makes him the object of his worship instead of Allah. There are people who ignore what Allah has declared lawful and unlawful or what He has permitted and what has forbidden. People who do not care what Allah has forbidden and follow their whims and fancies, their desires are their god, in this sense, although they may not have uttered it by word of mouth. The same

theme has been versified by an ‘Arif:

سوده گشت از سجده راه بُتار پیشانیم چند بر خود تهمت دینِ مسلمانی نهم

“My forehead has swollen by prostrating before the statues of beauty, although I claim to profess the religion of Islam.”

In this couplet, the poet has portrayed selfish desires as statues. He who takes his desires as his leader and follows them is as good as their worshipper, that is why they have been described as their deities. Sayyidnā Abū ‘Umāmah رضی اللہ عنہ narrates that the Messenger of Allah said: “Of all the deities worshipped under the firmament of the earth, the most detestable one in the sight of Allah is *hawa*, that is, selfish desires. Sayyidnā Shaddād Ibn ‘Aws رضی اللہ عنہ narrates that the Messenger of Allah said: “A wise person is he who keeps his desires under control and works for life after death; and sinful is he who runs after his desires and yet expects the best in the Hereafter.” Sayyidnā Sahl Ibn ‘Abdullāh Tustarī رضی اللہ عنہ said: “Your ailment is your selfish desires. And if you oppose them, it will turn into your cure.” (All these narratives have been adapted from Qurṭubī).

وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ “...and nothing destroys us except time...(45:24)” The word *dahr* means ‘time from the beginning of the world to its end’. It also refers to ‘a very long period of time’. The atheists alleged that their life and death have nothing to do with Divine will and command. They happen under natural causes. Death is a process which they say they experience when their human limbs, organs and abilities diminish on account of constant use and, with the passage of time, the matter becomes dissolved and is destroyed; and that this is the be-all and end-all of human existence, there being no life hereafter. Likewise, life has nothing to do with Divine will and command. Life too, like death, happens under movement of material causes .

Reviling Time Is Inappropriate

Atheists believed that ‘Time’ is the cause of life, death, vicissitudes of conditions and adversities, and also the cause of the revolution of the entire universe. Every happening used to be attributed to ‘Time’ by them as indicated in this verse, whereas the fact is that everything happens with the Divine will and volition. Therefore, authentic Traditions prohibit reviling of time. The power which the unbelievers describe as ‘time’ is in fact the Divine power. When people curse or revile time for their

adversities, they are in fact directing their reproach to Allah. The Messenger of Allah said: "Do not revile time because time actually is Allah." The ignorant who claim that a particular work was done by time is actually the work of Divine power - time is nothing. It does not necessarily follow from this proposition that *ad-dahr* is one of the names of Allah. Here Allah is referred to as *ad-dahr* metaphorically or figuratively.

Verses 27 - 37

وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُخْسِرُ
 الْمُبْطِلُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَتَرَى كُلَّ أُمَّةٍ جَائِيَةً نَدْعَىٰ كُلَّ أُمَّةٍ تَدْعَىٰ إِلَىٰ كِتَابِهَا
 الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ هَذَا كِتَابُنَا يَنْطِقُ عَلَيْكُمْ
 بِالْحَقِّ ۖ إِنَّا كُنَّا نَسْتَنْسِخُ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
 وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُدْخِلُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ ۖ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ
 الْمُبِينُ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَوَافَلَمْ يَكُنْ إِلَهُهُمُ يُدْعَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ
 فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكُنتُمْ قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ وَإِذَا قِيلَ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ
 وَالسَّاعَةُ لَارِيبَ فِيهَا فَلْتُمَّ مَا نَدْرِي مَا السَّاعَةُ ۚ إِنَّ نَظْنَ إِلَّا ظَنًّا وَمَا
 نَحْنُ بِمُستَقِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَبَدَا لَهُمْ سَيِّئَاتُ مَا عَمِلُوا وَحَاقَ بِهِمْ
 مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَقِيلَ الْيَوْمَ نَنسِفُكُمْ كَمَا نَسِيفُ لِقَاءَ
 يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا وَمَا وَبَّكُمُ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّنْ نَّصِيرِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾ ذَلِكُمْ
 بِأَنَّكُمْ اتَّخَذْتُمْ إِلِهَٰتَ اللَّهِ هُزُوًا وَغَرَّتْكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا ۚ فَالْيَوْمَ
 لَا يُخْرَجُونَ مِنْهَا وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ فَلِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ رَبِّ
 السَّمَوَاتِ وَرَبِّ الْأَرْضِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَلَهُ الْكِبْرِيَاءُ فِي
 السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٣٧﴾

And to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. And the day the Hour will take place, the adherents of falsehood shall lose. [27] And you will see

every community kneeling down. Every community will be called to its Book (of record). Today you will be recompensed for what you used to do. [28] This is Our book that speaks against you with truth. We used to get recorded all that you used to do. [29] Then, as for those who believed and did righteous deeds, their Lord will admit them to His mercy. That is indeed the achievement, visible to all. [30] And as to those who disbelieved, (it will be said to them,) “ Had My verses not been recited to you? But you showed arrogance, and you were a guilty people. [31] And when it was said to you that Allah’s promise is true and there is no doubt in the (arrival of the) Hour, you used to say, ‘We do not know what the Hour is. We do not think (about it) but as an assumption, and we are not sure.’” [32] And revealed to them will be the evils of what they did, and encircled they will be by what they used to ridicule. [33] And it will be said, “Today We will forget you like you forgot facing this your day, and your abode is the Fire, and for you there are no helpers at all. [34] That is because you took Allah’s verses as a laughing stock, and the worldly life deceived you.” So today they will neither be brought out of it, nor will they be asked to repent. [35] So, to Allah belongs all praise, who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of the worlds. [36] And to Him belongs majesty in the heavens and the earth. And He is the Mighty, the Wise. [37]

Commentary

وَرَتَّى كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ جَانِيَةً (‘And you will see every community kneeling down... 45:28’). The word *jāthiyah* is derived from جُثُو جُثُو *juthuww*. It means ‘to sit with knees upon the ground’. Sayyidnā Sufyān رحمه الله says that the word means ‘to sit in such a way that only the knees and the toes of the feet rest on the ground’. The latter type of sitting will be on account of awe, horror and fear. The words, كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ “every community” means that horrors of Resurrection will be felt by all on the plain - believers, non-believers, and righteous and unrighteous, all of them. There are other verses and traditions that exclude the Prophets and the righteous from experiencing the horrors of the Plains of Resurrection. The present verse is not in conflict with them. It is possible that the Prophets and the righteous will experience the horrors of the Plains of Resurrection for a short period of time - the period of time will be so short as if it never existed. It is also possible that the word *kull* is not used in the sense of “every” but in the

sense of 'most' - as is used occasionally. From this point of view, the phrase would mean not all the people on the Plain of Resurrection but 'most people' will experience horror, thus the prophets and the righteous are excluded. Some of the scholars take the position that the word *jathiyah* means 'to sit like the sitting posture in salah'. If this be taken for granted, the difficulty automatically disappears because such a sitting is not out of fear or horror. It is out of respect and honour.

كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ تُدْعَى إِلَى كِتَابِهَا "...Every community will be called to its book (of record)...45:28". The word *kitāb*, according to most commentators, refers to 'book of record' which the angels have been writing in the world. The record-books will be thrown on the Plains of Resurrection and each one will receive his respective record-book and it will be said to him: اقْرَأْ كِتَابَكَ "Read your book. This day you yourself are enough to take your own account. (17:14)" The phrase 'Calling towards the record-books' purports to say that they will have to render an account of their deeds before Allah in the next life.

Alhamdulillah
The Commentary on
Sūrah Aljāthiyah
Ends here